

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-18 (Previously Canceled)

19. (Withdrawn) A mat comprising a pile surface fabric and a rubber or rubber-like backing material connected to the pile surface fabric, wherein both the pile surface fabric and the backing material extend to the edge of the mat, and wherein the pile surface fabric is provided with a visually distinctive border portion that contrasts with the remainder of the pile surface fabric and that extends along at least a portion of the edge of the pile surface fabric.
20. (Withdrawn) The mat according to Claim 19, wherein the border portion of the pile surface fabric extends along the entire perimeter of the pile surface fabric.
21. (Withdrawn) The mat according to Claim 19, wherein the edge of the mat comprises a cut edge, whereby the cut edge is the result of a single cutting operation through the pile surface fabric and the backing material.
22. (Withdrawn) The mat according to Claim 20, wherein the edge of the mat comprises a cut edge, whereby the cut edge is the result of a single cutting operation through the pile surface fabric and the backing material.
23. (Withdrawn) The mat according to Claim 19, wherein the backing material is vulcanized to the pile surface fabric.
24. (Withdrawn) The mat according to Claim 19, wherein the border portion has on its upper surface a contrasting colour, the border portion selected from the group

consisting of (a) a printed portion of the pile surface fabric, (b) a portion of the pile surface fabric produced using pre-dyed yarns, (c) a portion of the pile surface fabric produced by selective melting of the yarns in the pile surface fabric, and (d) a portion of the pile surface fabric screened from a printing or dyeing process applied to the remainder of the pile surface fabric by selective application of a liquid repellent to the border portion.

25. (Withdrawn) The mat according to Claims 19, wherein the border portion has on its upper surface a contrasting texture, the border portion comprising a pile height produced by a process selected from the group consisting of selective melting, mechanical carving and chemical treatment of the yarns, in the pile surface fabric.
26. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing a mat comprising a pile surface fabric and a rubber or rubber-like backing material connected to said pile surface fabric, comprising the steps of:
- a. bonding a pile surface fabric to a rubber or rubber-like backing material, the pile surface fabric having elongate, visually distinctive areas of contrasting surface appearance, and
 - b. cutting through the pile surface fabric and backing material along at least one of the elongate areas to form a mat, wherein the cut portion of the elongate area forms a border portion of the mat.

27. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 26, wherein the pile surface fabric has longitudinal and transverse elongate, visually distinctive areas of contrasting surface appearance forming a grid on the pile surface fabric.
28. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 27, wherein the pile surface fabric and backing material are cut along two longitudinal and two transverse elongate areas to form a substantially rectangular mat.
29. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 26, wherein the bonding step is achieved by vulcanization of the rubber backing layer to the pile surface fabric.
30. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 26, wherein the method includes the step of using a visual scanning means to scan the pile surface fabric and identify the position of the elongate areas.
31. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 26, wherein the method includes the step of using a mechanical guide sensor to identify the position of the elongate areas when the elongate areas are of distinctive heights, by physically sensing the distinction in height.
32. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 30, wherein the method also includes the step of using an electronic control means to guide a cutting means to cut through the pile surface fabric and backing material

along a cutting line having a predefined position with respect to the position of the elongate area.

33. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 31, wherein the method also includes the step of using an electronic control means to guide a cutting means to cut through the pile surface fabric and backing material along a cutting line having a predefined position with respect to the position of the elongate area.
34. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 26, wherein the elongate, visually distinctive areas are areas of contrasting surface colour, the areas of contrasting surface colour being achieved by a method step selected from the group consisting of:
- dyeing the pile surface fabric;
 - forming the pile surface fabric with areas which comprise pre-dyed yarns;
 - selectively applying heat on the pile surface fabric, wherein the pile surface fabric comprises a blend of fibers of polymers having different melting points;
 - selectively applying chemicals containing a liquid repellent on the pile surface fabric, wherein the pile surface fabric is rewetted by the application of liquid and subjected to heat treatment to carve the areas to which the liquid was applied; and

selectively applying chemicals to carve the upper surface of the pile surface fabric and reveal a lower portion of the pile surface fabric having a contrasting color to the color of the fibres at the upper surface of the pile fabric.

35. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 26, wherein the elongate, visually distinctive areas are areas of contrasting surface texture, the areas of contrasting texture being achieved by the step of selectively carving areas of the pile surface fabric.
36. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 35, wherein the carving is carried out by a process selected from the group consisting of acid carving, mechanical carving and shearing.
37. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 35, wherein the carving is carried out by applying a degrading agent to the pile fibers in the area to be carved, heating the pile fabric to cause degradation of the pile fibers, and mechanically removing the degraded fibers.
38. (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 35, wherein the carving is carried out by the step of selective application of chemicals containing a liquid repellent on the pile surface fabric, wherein the fabric is subsequently rewetted by the application of liquid and subjected to heat treatment to carve the areas to which liquid repellent has been applied.